



TERN OF EVENTS

PRESQUE ISLE AUDUBON SOCIETY NEWSLETTER
FEBRUARY 2010 ISSUE 10:01

Our mission is to promote the conservation and protection of wildlife, plants, soil, and water in relation to human activity, to initiate and carry out plans and activities which would contribute to the conservation and protection of these natural resources; and to provide opportunities to become more aware and appreciative of our physical and biological environment.

THE PRESIDENT'S PERCH



Winter! The cold, the snow, the ice! The great birding opportunities! No? Well I disagree. I did not make the Christmas Bird Count yet again in 2009 (someday my schedule will allow this), but this doesn't mean I don't like birding in the winter time. In fact, it holds some of my favorite birding moments.

I know that winter birding is not everybody's bag, but my husband Mike and I have racked up some of our greatest birding adventures in the cold. A few years back, we decided to get more waterfowl checked off the list, so we spent as much time as we could out along Beach 11 and the bays. One particularly funny moment had us in a duck blind on Beach 11 on a very windy day trying to steady our scope on its flimsy tripod with equally shaky shivering fingers. That was the day we pledged to get a better tripod.

Since then, we've acquired that better tripod and have had many more chilly thrills: correctly identifying the common golden eyes flying overhead by their whistling wings, sifting through the difference between greater and lesser scaups and feeling confident that we could tell them apart. Then there was that very windy afternoon spent trying to find the rare Eurasian widgeon on Misery Bay. We have persevered in the cold to

find our first white-winged scoter way out there in a raft of mixed ducks, searching the countryside for freshly turned fields and the snow buntings that are attracted to them, and found our first northern shrike at a game land in North East. And we even spent a beautifully cold Saturday morning last winter watching gulls with Jerry McWilliams at the Lake View landfill.

As much as I like chasing warblers in the spring, there is something exhilarating about finding a gem while cold and hovering over a scope. The find feels more special, more earned. So I can imagine what those were feeling at the Christmas Bird Count this past December. I've always wanted to be at the dinner at the end of the day to hear all the stories, reveling in everyone's best birds. Reading Evelyn Anderson's account of species found is great, but I can see the greater fun is in actually being there, feeling the warmth of the indoors after having been outside for awhile and feeling the warmth of camaraderie in a good day pursuing something special. (Cont. P 2)

FEBRUARY AND MAY THINGS TO DO!

February 10, Wednesday - Conservation

Committee Meeting, 5:00 PM at Quinn Firm

February 13, Saturday - Great Backyard

Bird Count at Cabin 2 on Presque Isle (P 5)

February 19, Friday - PIAS Monthly Meeting

Social at 7:00 PM and Programs at 7:30 in

Room 112 at the TREC (P 3)

May 7, 8, 9 - Third Festival of the Birds at

Presque Isle (**Become a sponsor**) (P 5)

May 15, Saturday - Field Trip! (P 3)

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The *Tern of Events* is published by the **Presque Isle Audubon Society**, a chapter of the National Audubon Society and a member of Audubon Pennsylvania serving northwestern Pennsylvania including Erie and Crawford counties.

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PRESIDENT'S PERCH (Cont.)

In the wake of this missed opportunity of the Christmas count, I pledged to help out with the Great Backyard Bird Count event we are hosting at Cabin 2 at Presque Isle on Saturday, February 13, from 9 am - 12 pm. Please join us for the event and do, please, contact our Education committee chair, Michele Franz if you are able to volunteer some time. This event has always been a great opportunity to share birding and the Audubon mission with people from the community.

(See more on page 5)

It's likely that we won't see anything really rare that day, but a bright cardinal is still a wonderful thing as it lights up a branch. And helping a first timer identify that grey-backed bird with the white in its tail as a junco may just make juncos new again for you, too.

Those cardinals and juncos, as well as all the other regulars: chickadees, hairy and downy woodpeckers, titmice, and house finches are my mainstay at work right now. I still enjoy saying hello to them on my way in from the car and I watch for them outside my window. Even though they are "ordinary" birds, I would miss them if they were suddenly gone. Every now and then, though, I am treated with a visit from the handsome red bellied woodpecker who I can always tell is close by his voice. I relish that small moment from when I first hear it until I locate it up in the bare branches of a tree nearby. It is filled with anticipation and the promise of a few seconds looking at old friend.

So, yes, the warblers are coming (and so is the Festival of the Birds, May 7-9). But until then, I am happy with my chickadees, finches and woodpeckers. And I know I can still look forward to some interesting adventures, albeit cold ones, in search of those elusive waterfowl, gulls and other winter birds still not checked off our list.

So here's to winter and the snow and the ice. And to the hot chocolate that tastes so much better after a good day outside in the cold.

~Mary Birdsong, President of PIAS

CHICKADEES: WINTER SURVIVORS



Unlike many birds that make risky journeys of thousands of miles to winter in the tropics, chickadees take their chances right at home throughout the winter. Boreal Chickadees can survive temperatures of minus 50 degrees Fahrenheit! To ensure a food supply throughout winter, chickadees hide insects and seeds and can recover them a month later. To save energy at night, Black-capped Chickadees lower their body temperature by 18-22 degrees Fahrenheit. By choosing good roost holes and lowering their body temperatures, Carolina Chickadees can conserve 50% of their energy reserves and survive temperatures at night that would be lethal by day. To learn more about five species of chickadees, including how to identify all of them, visit the [All About Birds](#) website.

PIAS FEBRUARY MEETING AND PROGRAMS

There will be two presentations at our meeting this month.

7:30-8:15 Michele Franz, Education Chair, will report on PIAS's **Great Backyard Bird Count** that was held on Saturday, February 13 at Cabin 2 on Presque Isle State Park. She will include photos and highlights and the bird count totals and perhaps count totals from other locales as available.

8:20-9:20 Dr. Steven Ropski, longtime Audubon member and Gannon University Professor of Biology, will present "**The Grizzly Bears of Yellowstone National Park.**" Dr. Ropski is also well known for leading summer tours to Yellowstone. Trip goers swear that he can find a special mammal or bird that is on their wish list!

ALLEGANY NATURE PILGRIMAGE: LOOKING FOR A COMMITTEE MEMBER

Do you enjoy the Allegany Nature Pilgrimage each year at Allegany State Park? Would you like to contribute to the future of the pilgrimage by helping with the behind the scene planning? Join the pilgrimage committee! Since the Allegany Nature Pilgrimage is a co-sponsored event by the Audubon Societies in Buffalo, Jamestown, Erie and the Rochester Nature Club, the by-laws state two members from each society must comprise the Pilgrimage Committee. Currently I am the only PIAS member. I have been doing this for over 20 years! I love it, otherwise I would have stepped down. We meet four times a year.

This year the event will be held **June 4,5,6, 2010** and we meet at the conclusion on **June 5th, Sunday**, at 1:00 pm in the dining hall of Camp Allegany.

Our last meeting before this year's event will be **April 11th** at 1:00 pm in Allegany State Park. We'll be at the warming hut at the Summit! A beautiful setting. Please consider joining the committee. We do a lot via email. Check us out at <http://alleganynaturepilgrimage.com>.

If interested call Lisa Danko at 898-0284.

BREAKING NEWS! WE HAVE A FIELD TRIP PLANNED FOR SPRING AT THE LAURA OLSEN SANCTUARY!

Join us on **Saturday, May 15th**, for a morning field trip to one of PIAS's three sanctuaries. We will be exploring the 51 acre Laura Olsen Memorial Sanctuary in Crawford County, looking for birds (of course!) and spring wildflowers. Come rain or shine, we'll leave from the Quality Market parking lot on Route 8 at 8:00 AM, and carpool to the Sanctuary about 15 minutes away. This Sanctuary includes a small wetland area but it's easy to skirt around, so no special footwear is required. We'll view forested ravines and migrating songbirds.

For more information, contact trip leader Sue Murawski at suemurawski@verizon.net.

~Sue Murawski, Sanctuary Chair

BIRD SIGHTINGS

The following birds of note were reported from December, 2009 through January 10, 2010 from Presque Isle State Park unless noted otherwise.

Snow Goose—35 to 40; over west Millcreek; Dec. 15; K.A. (See below)



Mute Swan—2; Dec. 16 to at least Jan. 9; Presque Isle Bay; J.M.

Black Scoter—1; to at least Dec. 6; Edinboro Lake; M.V.

Peregrine Falcon—1 pair; through December; east end of the park; m.ob.

Black Vulture—1; Dec. 6; beach 10, P.P.; D.M. (fide S.S.)

Dunlin—1; Dec. 16 (late); Sunset Point (Waterbird count); J.M.

Iceland Gull—up to 2; Dec. 17 to 19; Lake View Landfill; J.M.

Lesser Black-backed Gull—1; Dec. 17; Lakeview Landfill; J.M. 1; Dec. 19; Presque Isle Bay; J.M.

Glacucous Gull—1 or 2; Dec. 8 & 14 to 19; Sunset Point (waterbird count), Lake View Landfill; J.M., 1; Dec. 14; near Lakeview landfill; M.F. Up to 2; Dec. 17 to 19; Lake View Landfill; J.M., B.C.

Rufous/Allen's Hummingbird—1; to Dec. 10; Harborcreek; S.B.

Northern Shrike—1; Dec. 23 to at least Jan. 10; Franklin Center; J.D.

Northern Mockingbird—1; Jan. 5; Erie; B.B. (fide M.F.) 1; Jan. 7; Erie; J.P.

American Pipit—1; Dec. 23 (late); Perry Monument; J.F.

Contributors: K.A.-Katie Andersen, B.B.-Brian Berchtold, S.B.-Sharon Brandt, B.C.-Ben Coulter, J.D.-Julie Dell, M.F.-Mike Fialkovich, J.F.-Jim Flynn, M.F.-Michele Franz, D.M.-Don McClelland, J.M.-Jerry McWilliams, J.P.-Janet Price, S.S.-Sam Stull, M.V.-Mark Vass, m.ob.-many observers

~Jerry McWilliams, Bird Records Chair
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MEMBERSHIP NEWS

NOTICE FROM NATIONAL AUDUBON

PIAS can get credit for your membership if you include our chapter code on your membership application, it is COZU150Z (C-zero-Z-U15-Zero-Z).

We welcome all of our new members as well as our renewals. I want to remind everyone that when you join National Audubon, you are automatically a member of our local chapter, the Presque Isle Audubon, and are welcome to attend our monthly membership meetings.

Erie: Steven Brugger, Carolyn Fialkowski, Susan Freed, Allane Grise, Anne Hornyak, Robert Learn, Eric Miller, Marti Miller, Don Murch, Mitch Petroff, Brian Winslow, Marilyn Woznicki, S, Alexander, Nancy Stage, Robert Barcio, Paula Shoop, Carol Hadaway-Nelsen, Barbara Kozen, Jay Mauri, Patti Stephany, Rick Cole, Shauna Jackson, Scott Hallock, Anne Sauers, George Huzinec, John Fette, C. Diven, and James Welka

Albion: Edwin Finley, Irene Chelune

Cambridge Springs: Dale Baker, Robert Nolan, Julie Pierce

Centerville: Maxine Hulings

Cochrannton: Linda Smock, Jane Toppo

Conneuat Lake: Janice Courtney

Edinboro: Elouise Connors, Sarah Thompson, Margaret Vitali, Rcihard Hymes, and John Yonko

Fairview: Blossom McBrier

Girard: Sue Ellen Cardman and Elizabeth Nace

Guys Mills: Robert Gleeson

Linesville: Richard Dean

McKean: Susan Groh

Meadville: Natalie King, Amy Miller, Janice Emblidge and Barbara Kuter

North East: Martha Pierson

Saegertown: Henry Archacki and Shawn Trzeciak

Springboro: Arlene Baker

Townville: Carolyn Chase, Dorothy Vickers and Roberta Custard

Union City: William Yukon

Warren: Melinda King, Laura Lester, B.J. Chester, and David Kyler (Cont. P 5)

MEMBERSHIP NEWS (Continued)

We also welcome the following **Chapter Only** members:

Diane Kallor, John Churchill, Mr & Mrs. Gregory, Richard Cook, Elmer Lawrence, David Woledge, Tom & Maria Williams, Elaine Cook, June Alexander, Robert Gross, Emily & Andrew Leeds, Janice Piazza, Liz Dilla, Jeffery Ames, Michael Plyler, Tracy Graziano, LeeAnn Reiners, Sue Murawski, Lora Caldwell, Barry Gray & Chris Troutman, Patricia Pora, Marti Pastore, Joao Tavares, Bonnie Ginader and Nancy Baker

~Ron Intrieri, Membership Chair

membership@presqueisleaudubon.org

SALES REMINDERS

Suet Time!

Suet will be available at the February meeting only.

2010 Calendar

If you missed our beautiful 2010 "Birds" calendar in November, don't fret -- you can still buy one (or more) at our February meeting.

~Jeanne Kern, Chair, Sales & Marketing

THE THIRD FESTIVAL OF THE BIRDS AT PRESQUE ISLE

Our festival is scheduled for Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, May 7, 8, and 9. We are planning to include more field trips and more workshops for those who wanted more. The pontoon rides are in our plans, also, along with activities for children and families on Sunday afternoon. The Saturday evening meal followed by our keynote speaker, Dr. Bridget Stutchbury whose talk is titled "The Bird Detective: Investigating the Secret Lives of Birds", is included in the registration as well as Saturday lunch. A variety of sponsor levels includes registration and acknowledgement in our program. You can soon get more details on our website: www.presqueisleaudubon.org.

~Janet Price, Festival of the Birds Chair

13TH ANNUAL GREAT BACKYARD BIRD COUNT



The Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC) will be held on Saturday, February 13, 2010 from 9-12 at Cabin 2 on Presque Isle. The event will include information about the bird count and why it's held, a bit of historical perspective, hints to attract birds to your backyard, a crafting activity and a nature walk (weather permitting).

Participants are encouraged to bring binoculars if they have them and warm clothes! We will be serving coffee, cocoa and light snacks.

In conjunction with the GBBC we will be having a presentation at the PIAS general meeting on the February 19th that will include photos and highlights from the Presque Isle GBBC and our count totals and perhaps count totals from other locales as available.

~Michele Franz, Education Chair

You can also conduct the GBBC at your own home or neighborhood. The GBBC is an annual four-day event that engages bird watchers of all ages in counting birds to create a real-time snapshot of where the birds are across the continent and in Hawaii. Anyone can participate, from beginning bird watchers to experts. It takes as little as 15 minutes on one day, or you can count for as long as you like each day of the event. It's free, fun, and easy—and it helps the birds.

For more information go to :

<http://www.birdsource.org/gbbc/howto.htm>

CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT 2009



HORNED GREBE

Many thanks to everyone who helped to make this year's Christmas Bird Count a success. 28 of us set out on a cold and snowy Saturday to count the birds of the Erie Christmas count circle. Most of our volunteers were veteran counters but a few were new to this annual tradition which is always a good thing. We ended up with 69 species for the day and had 3 more species for the count week period (3 days before and after the official count day). Thanks again to all who helped make the 2009 Christmas count a success.

~Chuck Gehringer, CBC Compiler

1. Canada Goose	465	21. Wild Turkey	94
2. Mute Swan	2	22. Red-throated Loon	1
3. Tundra Swan	161	23. Common Loon	2
4. Wood Duck	1	24. Pied-billed Grebe	4
5. American Wigeon	1	25. Horned Grebe	6
6. American Bl. Duck	20	26. Double-crested Cormorant	12
7. Mallard	304	27. Great Blue Heron	7
8. Canvasback	500	28. Bald Eagle	1 adult
9. Redhead	72	29. Sharp-shinned Hawk	1
10. Ring-necked Duck	8	30. Coopers Hawk	4
11. Greater Scaup	210	31. Red-tailed Hawk	19
12. Lesser Scaup	67	32. American Kestrel	2
Scaup sp.	5105	33. Peregrine Falcon	1
13. White-winged Scoter	10	34. American Coot	557
14. Black Scoter	3	35. Bonaparte's Gull	41
15. Long-tailed Duck	1	36. Ring-billed Gull	4209
16. Bufflehead	123	37. Herring Gull	1552
17. Common Goldeneye	236	38. Iceland Gull	2
18. Hooded Merganser	30	39. Lesser Black backed Gull	1
19. Common Merganser	67	40. Glaucous Gull	3
20. Red-breasted Merganser	98	41. Great Black backed Gull	95
		42. Rock Pigeon	604
		43. Mourning Dove	69
		44. Great Horned Owl	1
		45. Red bellied Woodpecker	27
		46. Downy Woodpecker	50
		47. Hairy Woodpecker	9
		48. Northern Flicker	11
		49. Pileated Woodpecker	1
		50. Blue Jay	74
		51. American Crow	284
		52. Black-capped Chickadee	114
		53. Tufted Titmouse	55
		54. Red-breasted Nuthatch	1
		55. White-breasted Nuthatch	28
		56. Golden-crowned Kinglet	7
		57. Eastern Bluebird	4
		58. American Robin	129
		59. European Starling	515
		60. Cedar Waxwing	77
		61. Yellow-rumped Warbler	69
		62. American Tree Sparrow	116

63. Song Sparrow	2
64. White-throated Sparrow	7
65. Dark-eyed Junco	56
66. Northern Cardinal	67
67. House Finch	47
68. American Goldfinch	20
69. House Sparrow	162

Also seen during count week were:
Gadwall, Surf Scoter, Dunlin



RED BREASTED NUTHATCH

Total number of birds: 16,704

Weather: Cloudy ,snow heavy at times, Temp 25-34 F Snow 2-4 inches Wind E 0-7 mph

Observers: Mark Kudrav, Jerry McWilliams, Don Nixon, Julie Dell, Bruce Baldwin, Beth Baldwin, Pat Howell, Adam Erb, Henry Chupp, Andrew Troyer, Marcus Troyer, Harold Otto, Don Snyder, Steven Miller, Albert Massey, Toni Kelly, Julie Leonard, Richard Farver, Bonnie Ginader, Janice Grindle, Janet Price, Joao Tavares, Ben Coulter, Ruth Swaney, Toby Cunningham, Barb Mitchell, Marcy Rahner, Chuck Gehringer .

PENNSYLVANIA LAKE ERIE WATERSHED ASSOCIATION

By Anna McCartney

As the organizational advisor for Pennsylvania Lake Erie Watershed Association (PLEWA), my goal is to increase membership so PLEWA can become a force in Northwestern Pennsylvania that involves citizens of all ages to protect the entire Lake Erie Watershed.



Pennsylvania Lake Erie Watershed Association

A stronger PLEWA means more grants and more support for other environmental groups that have similar goals. It means that elected officials will be more likely to take us all seriously. We can then fix past mistakes and make sure not to repeat them. We need to Begin ANEW!

"We abuse land because we regard it as a commodity belonging to us. When we see land as a community to which we belong, we may begin to use it with love and respect."

- Aldo Leopold, A Sand County Almanac, 1949

A strong PLEWA can help bring that sense of community to our entire watershed. I would appreciate your membership. Contact info below.

Anna McCartney
Communications and Education Specialist
Pennsylvania Sea Grant
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E-mail: axm40@psu.edu

The Presque Isle Audubon Society's newsletter, the *Tern of Events*, is published monthly, except in July and January. The deadline for submissions is the 15th of the month preceding publication. All published material subject to editing.

Send submissions to Janet Price, editor, via editor@presqueisleaudubon.org or 418 E. 36th St., Erie, PA 16504. If you have any questions, call Janet at 814.825.8394.

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**Presque Isle Audubon Society
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Chapter only membership includes membership in the
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chapter newsletter *Tern of Events*.

Individual membership \$10.00/year

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Presque Isle Audubon Society
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Erie, PA 16505**

National Audubon Society Membership Application

Please enroll me as a New member in the National
Audubon Society. Membership includes membership
in BOTH the National Audubon Society and the local
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receive *Audubon Magazine* (6 issues per year) and the
monthly newsletter *Tern of Events*.

Introductory membership \$20.00

Renewals \$35.00

Students and seniors \$15.00

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Chapter Code COZU150Z

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**National Audubon Society
P.O. Box 422250**

Palm coast, FL 32142-2250

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